

NORTH DAKOTA STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL
QUARTERLY MEETING
JANUARY 10, 2014 – STATEWIDE POLYCOM

MEETING MINUTES

Members Present

Pat Anderson (via phone)	Scott Burlingame	Christy Coughlin
Russ Cusack	Tim Davenport	Sherry DeFrancesco
Harley Engelman	Vickay Gross	Deborah Jendro
Darren Moos (via phone)	Kelly Smeltzer	

Members Absent

Rod Gillund	Donene Feist	Jillian Schaible
Teri Wilder	Marshall Longie	

State Office Staff

Patty Wanner	Lynn Derman (presenter)
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Chairman Scott Burlingame called the meeting to order. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

Agenda

Agenda accepted without change.

Approval of October Minutes

Action: A motion was made by Harley Engelman and seconded by Pat Anderson to accept the SRC quarterly minutes from its last meeting on October 8-9. Motion carried.

Vice Chair

Don Brunette has resigned from the Council as he moved to Minnesota. Those interested in the position of Vice Chair should notify Scott or Patty and the candidates will be discussed at the next meeting. Individual must be a voting member. Vice Chair does not have a lot of responsibility other than facilitating the meeting in the absence of the Chair.

Action: A motion was made by Harley Engelman and seconded by Tim Davenport for the SRC to look at developing a plan of succession with its officers. Motion carried.

It was recommended this be managed under Member/PR Committee.

DVR Regional Updates

Region 3 - Nancy Lundon, Devils Lake

- Region 3 serves six counties (Benson, Cavalier, Eddy, Ramsey, Rolette, and Towner)
- There are two 121 tribal programs that operate on their own.
- Devils Lake will be piloting AWARE, which will replace the current VRIS system. Implementation is scheduled for March 2014. Staff have been very involved and are eager to get started.
- CMT (cognitive motivational tools) are being used. Devils Lake VR staff partnered with Bismarck VR staff and clinical staff at the regional human service center in order to have discussions and practice time.
- There has been an increase in referrals in the last 6 months.
- Plan to fill a vacant counselor position this spring. Position has been vacant since end of October 2013.
- A summary of outreach activity was provided.
- Boom in Devils Lake with numerous new businesses coming to town. Mostly favorable impacts. Challenges are finding workers, housing, and daycare. There are some higher end townhouses and some single family units; not much available for apartments or public housing.
- A public forum will be held on Tuesday April 1 from 2-4 pm at the city library.

Region 1 - Andrea Meyer, Williston

- Region 1 serves three counties (Divide, McKenzie, and Williams). All experiencing huge oil impact.
- According to the US Census Bureau, Williston is the fastest growing town from 10,000 to 50,000.
- Apartment construction has boomed, up 58% compared to 2012. New dwellings were down as were duplexes. Rent is \$1200-\$1500 for one bedroom minimally.
- Glut of job openings – 716 job openings reported in Williams County currently; medical facilities are stretched; have experienced baby boom 28% increase in babies in 2013; new restaurants have opened but no new retail; mail delivery problems; power brown outs; water and sewer problems; resources are over taxed yet growing as best they can.
- Client referrals are lagging behind, not at 25% yet a quarter of the way through the year. Beginning to come back up in VR with success in specific job carving, tailoring jobs and experiences to clients; using incentives.
- Williston has the only in-house VR supported employment program. Have experienced a decline in supported employment. Currently have five clients and are down from six job coaches to one. Have potential to rebuild and are optimistic.
- Recently hired a new counselor and have a half time staff in Watford City.
- Continue to have unprecedented growth in business but most are oil field and VR clients are unable to fill these positions due to technical demands.
- Keeping watch on new businesses in town to find potential openings.

- Williston does not have a community rehab provider (CRP) in the area. Still has in-house SEP and coordinates with Opportunity Foundation.
- Order of selection has pared down numbers in terms of open cases. Using CMT to get back on track and make a difference in people's lives.
- Plan to capture more transition students; coming off order and not having a wait list will make people more apt to apply; have had some good placements lately and looking for more successful closures.

Budget Report – Lynn Derman

- Closed out 2012 grant award and fully expended the award.
- Currently spending required match and maintenance of effort (MOE) for 2014 grant award. Expenses coming out of general fund to meet match and MOE.
- The budget building process for 2015-17 biennium will be starting within the next 2 ½ - 3 months.

Inquiry made regarding status of Older Blind (OB) and Randolph Sheppard:

- Older Blind – 2013 grant was spent before the end of FFY 2013; used some SSA funds to fully fund FFY 2013
- Received an additional \$100,000 in general fund for OB this biennium
- Randolph-Sheppard – on target; implementing quarterly payment system in 2014 vs annual lump sum payment
- New training program has been defined and one new vendor has begun training to be licensed and will potentially operate a new site in Bismarck

A request was made for Lynn to provide an update on Older Blind, Randolph-Sheppard, and Social Security Reimbursement at each quarterly meeting.

Order of Selection (OOS) – Russ

It has been 2 years since DVR has entered an order of selection. DVR has used a methodical approach to take people off the wait when they have had the capacity to serve. Two years later, category 1 and category 2 have been opened with no wait list. As of the beginning of January, the wait list has 65 individuals in category 3 and of those about 30 are under age 21. DVR anticipates opening category 3 in February or March 2014 and removing the individuals on wait list. All categories will be open.

The current State Plan identifies we will remain on order of selection. Russ does not know if we will enter the next State Plan in order of selection. The SRC will guide DVR in this decision. OOS is a tool, and there is no harm to be in order with categories open. Consumers have come off the wait list and have been moving to different statuses towards employment.

Annual Report

A request was made to send a hyperlink of the annual report to the council members.

Committee Discussion

Chairman Scott provided an overview of the Committees with roles/responsibilities. The Bylaws state it is the Chairperson's responsibility to assign members to committees. He would like to know where individuals would like to serve.

Planning/Evaluation Committee – Pat Anderson, Chair

The Planning and Evaluation committee reviewed the 4th Quarter Satisfaction Survey results, Year-End Cumulative reports, and the Strategic Plan Performance Measures report. The questions for the Annual Public Forums were reviewed and approved.

It was noted that the Status 08 & 30 responses for questions 2 and 5 continue to be below the 80% goal set by VR. And the FFY 2013 Cumulative Response Rate is also less than 80% for questions 2, 3, and 5. In an attempt to make the Client Satisfaction survey more user-friendly and generate an increased response rate, we submitted our revised draft of the Client Satisfaction Survey at the last meeting. We also received council feedback. Robyn Throlson (P&E liaison) informed us that due to other major projects she is working on at this time, she will not be able to meet with the Decision Support analyst until late spring/early summer 2014 to discuss the revised survey. She will keep the P & E committee and SRC apprised of the results of the meeting.

Pat reported that historically, responses to the Client Satisfaction Surveys have been low. SRC members asked if the committee had considered other survey methods such as contacting clients by telephone or e-mail. Pat explained that the P & E committee and the council had discussed alternate survey methods at a previous meeting, but the committee decided to try revising the survey first. If a revised survey does not increase responses, alternate methods will be explored.

P & E reviewed the Strategic Plan Performance Measures and noted that VR has been meeting or exceeding many of their goals. But in 2-VR Employment Services - the percentage of people employed after exit (44%) is below the goal of 65%. Robyn explained that VR did not meet that goal for the following reasons:

- Due to the smaller case load sizes resulting from Order of Selection (OOS), there were fewer cases closed rehabilitated.
- There were a higher number of unsuccessful closures as counselors were closing cases that were "stuck" to make room for people who were waiting.

Resource Committee – Harley Engelman, Chair

The goal is to meet quarterly. It is important for members to understand that VR counselors are required to obtain a master's degree. LouAnn Nider oversees the ongoing training needs of the Division. A current concern of LouAnn's is the significant turn over DVR has seen over this last year. LouAnn is at the forefront of training for the implementation of the new system so it will be difficult to devote time to the committee until after implementation.

Membership/Public Relations Committee – Vickay Gross, Chair

People who apply to become a member of the SRC may be under the impression that they are automatically guaranteed a position. To avoid confusion in the future, the committee recommends a statement should be added to the bottom of the application clarifying that an application does not guarantee appointment.

The committee has been working on ideas for recruitment in order to insure a diverse SRC. The SRC has not reach the 51% representation of people with disabilities. Additional applications have been received and are in the review process. Ideas for recruitment include SEP recipients, veterans w/ disabilities, people with mental illness, minorities etc.

DPI has provided an applicant and VR has recommended Sheri Wilson, VR Counselor.

The committee is working on a short document that will be used to increase awareness of the SRC mission and ongoing support of VR program.

Orientation for new members is being discussed. The committee is looking at mentoring new members to help them get through the first four modules.

The committee has been meeting approximately every 4 to 8 weeks. The committee is down to two members. New members are encouraged to join the committee.

It was noted that program designated positions do not need to be reviewed by the Council with recommendation to the Governor.

Action: A motion was made by Harley Engelman and seconded by Vickay Gross to forward the nomination received from the Department of Public Instruction, Kevin McDonough, to the Governor's Office. Motion carried.

It was recommended that Chairman Scott submit a letter to DVR or directly to the Governor's Office requesting clarification on the abilities of the council members and what they can and cannot do.

It was noted that RSAs interpretation is federal grant money cannot be used for lobbying.

Public Testimony/Success Stories at Meeting

Discussed a previous practice of the SRC to have designated public testimony times at the quarterly meetings and if there is value in doing this. Important to seek input on success stories as well as challenges individuals with disabilities have getting into the workplace.

DVR hosts annual public forums in the regions. This year the meetings will be held in Devils Lake and Bismarck in the month of April.

Chairman Scott assigned this item to the Planning/Evaluation Committee. Pat Anderson would like to share this responsibility with the Member/PR Committee and will plan for a joint meeting during the committee breakout session at the April SRC meeting.

Remainder of discussion of Prioritization of Legislative Issues will be tabled until the April meeting.

Action: Chairman Scott asked members to consider the following in preparation for the next meeting:

- What issues around employment are important to you?
- What can you do?

Next meeting April 24-25, 2014.

Meeting adjourned.